

IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of the claims replaces all prior versions of the claims in the application.

Claims 1-2 (Canceled.)

3. (Previously presented.) An isolated polynucleotide encoding a polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of:

- a) a polypeptide comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1,
- b) a naturally occurring polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence at least 90% identical to the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1,
- c) a biologically active fragment of a polypeptide having the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1, and
- d) an immunogenic fragment of a polypeptide having the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1.

4. (Previously presented.) An isolated polynucleotide of claim 3 encoding a polypeptide having the sequence of SEQ ID NO:1.

5. (Previously presented.) An isolated polynucleotide of claim 4, having the sequence of SEQ ID NO:2.

6. (Original.) A recombinant polynucleotide comprising a promoter sequence operably linked to a polynucleotide of claim 3.

7. (Original.) A cell transformed with a recombinant polynucleotide of claim 6.

8. (Canceled.)

9. (Currently Amended.) A method for producing a polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of:

- a) a polypeptide comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1,
- b) a naturally occurring polypeptide comprising [[the]] an amino acid sequence at least 90% identical to the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1,
- c) a biologically active fragment of a polypeptide having the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1, and
- d) an immunogenic fragment of a polypeptide having the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1, the method comprising:
 - i) culturing a cell under conditions suitable for expression of the polypeptide, wherein said cell is transformed with a recombinant polynucleotide, and said recombinant polynucleotide comprises a promoter sequence operably linked to a polynucleotide encoding said polypeptide, and
 - ii) recovering the polypeptide so expressed.

10. (Original.) A method of claim 9, wherein the polypeptide has the sequence of SEQ ID NO:1.

11. (Canceled.)

12. (Previously presented.) An isolated polynucleotide comprising a sequence selected from the group consisting of:

- a) a polynucleotide comprising the polynucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:2,
- b) a naturally occurring polynucleotide comprising a polynucleotide sequence at least 90% identical to the polynucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:2,
- c) a polynucleotide having a sequence fully complementary to the entire length of a polynucleotide of a),

- d) a polynucleotide having a sequence fully complementary to the entire length of a polynucleotide of b) and
- e) an RNA equivalent of a)-d).

13. (Original.) An isolated polynucleotide comprising at least 60 contiguous nucleotides of a polynucleotide of claim 12.

14. (Original.) A method for detecting a target polynucleotide in a sample, said target polynucleotide having a sequence of a polynucleotide of claim 12, the method comprising:

- f) hybridizing the sample with a probe comprising at least 20 contiguous nucleotides comprising a sequence complementary to said target polynucleotide in the sample, and which probe specifically hybridizes to said target polynucleotide, under conditions whereby a hybridization complex is formed between said probe and said target polynucleotide or fragments thereof, and
- g) detecting the presence or absence of said hybridization complex, and, optionally, if present, the amount thereof.

15. (Original.) A method of claim 14, wherein the probe comprises at least 60 contiguous nucleotides.

16. (Original.) A method for detecting a target polynucleotide in a sample, said target polynucleotide having a sequence of a polynucleotide of claim 12, the method comprising:

- a) amplifying said target polynucleotide or fragment thereof using polymerase chain reaction amplification, and
- b) detecting the presence or absence of said amplified target polynucleotide or fragment thereof, and, optionally, if present, the amount thereof.

17. (Canceled.)

18. (Canceled.)

28. (Original.) A method for screening a compound for effectiveness in altering expression of a target polynucleotide, wherein said target polynucleotide comprises a polynucleotide sequence of claim 5, the method comprising:

- a) exposing a sample comprising the target polynucleotide to a compound, under conditions suitable for the expression of the target polynucleotide,
- b) detecting altered expression of the target polynucleotide, and
- c) comparing the expression of the target polynucleotide in the presence of varying amounts of the compound and in the absence of the compound.

29. (Original.) A method for assessing toxicity of a test compound, the method comprising:

- a) treating a biological sample containing nucleic acids with the test compound,
- b) hybridizing the nucleic acids of the treated biological sample with a probe comprising at least 20 contiguous nucleotides of a polynucleotide of claim 12 under conditions whereby a specific hybridization complex is formed between said probe and a target polynucleotide in the biological sample, said target polynucleotide comprising a polynucleotide sequence of a polynucleotide of claim 12 or fragment thereof,
- c) quantifying the amount of hybridization complex, and
- d) comparing the amount of hybridization complex in the treated biological sample with the amount of hybridization complex in an untreated biological sample, wherein a difference in the amount of hybridization complex in the treated biological sample is indicative of toxicity of the test compound.